The Regimen Contains:

- **C**: Cytoxan® (cyclophosphamide)
- **H**: Adriamycin® (hydroxy doxorubicin)
- **O**: vincristine (Oncovin®)
- **P**: Prednisone

How Is This Regimen Given?

- CHOP is given every 21 days. The number of treatments, (called cycles), in your treatment plan is ____________.

- Cytoxan, Adriamycin, and Vincristine are given on the same day. Adriamycin is given first because it can be irritating to your veins.

- Cytoxan, Adriamycin, and Vincristine are given into your veins as an intravenous (IV) infusion.

- Prednisone is a tablet, taken daily by mouth for five days at the beginning of each cycle. To prevent indigestion, do not take it on an empty stomach. Prednisone can also cause an inability to relax/sleep at night. To minimize insomnia, take it with your breakfast meal.

- Your first chemotherapy infusion typically involves more time for teaching, preparation and other tasks. Plan to spend most of the day here for your first treatment. You should arrange to have a driver take you home after each treatment.
Infusion Related Reactions

- Adriamycin and Vincristine can cause irritation or pain along the vein where they are infused, rarely, tissue damage may occur. Tell the infusion nurse if you feel any pain or burning during the infusion.

- Adriamycin is a red liquid and may change the color of your urine to an orange/red/pink color for approximately 1-2 days.

Side Effects

This information is selective and does not cover all possible side effects.

- **Heartburn** or acid reflux is a common side effect of CHOP chemotherapy. Your doctor may encourage you to take a medication such as Pepcid*, Prilosec*, or Nexium* to help prevent or treat heartburn. Discuss any symptoms with your doctor before taking these medications.

- A temporary **decrease in blood cell counts** (white blood cells, red blood cells, and platelets) may occur 7 to 10 days after treatment with CHOP. Your blood counts will be monitored during your therapy, usually on the 10th to 14th day after treatment, and then again just prior to each treatment. Chemotherapy may be delayed during the regimen to allow blood counts to return to more normal levels.

White blood cells are the cells most affected during CHOP treatment, putting you at risk for getting an infection. Please use good judgment to try to avoid infection such as:

- Avoid physical contact with people who have a contagious infection such as the flu or a cold; avoid public crowds since you don’t know if they are sick
Practice good personal hygiene, especially frequent hand washing which is the most important way to prevent infections.

- Do not share drinking glasses or eating utensils.
- Check your temperature daily after CHOP treatment. Notify your physician if your temperature is >100.5 °F (between 100 and 101).

- **Mouth sores** may occur with CHOP, but they are not common. If they appear it is often between the 7th and 14th day after treatment. The sores can develop on the tongue, gums or in the throat. Discuss the use of salt & soda mouth rinses with your doctor. These are described in the Chemotherapy Patient Handbook and are made by combining ½ teaspoon of salt and ½ teaspoon of baking soda in a cup of warm water. Use this solution to rinse your mouth then spit the solution out, four times daily.

- **Bladder Irritation**

  Bladder irritation can be a concern with Cytoxan, but typically at higher doses than given with CHOP for lymphoma. However, you are requested to drink eight 12 ounce glasses of fluid (water, juice, etc.) during waking hours for one day after your treatment.

- **Nerve Irritation**

  Vincristine may cause numbness or tingling in the hands and feet. If this occurs, tell your doctor.

- **Nausea and vomiting** may be experienced with CHOP. It can begin shortly after chemotherapy is given. The duration varies from person to person but is usually 24 to 72 hours. You will be given medications to minimize or
prevent this side effect. Notify your doctor if this continues after taking the medications given to you, or if you are unable to keep down fluids.

- **Constipation** is common during CHOP treatment, particularly because of the Vincristine. Constipation is defined as having no bowel movement for more than 24 hours, or hard, straining bowel movements. It can be caused by many factors such as anti-nausea and pain medications, dehydration and some chemotherapy, such as Vincristine.

Preventing constipation is important. Routine use of a mild laxative (such as senna; Senokot®) and a stool softener (docusate; Colace®) is recommended for prevention. Drinking plenty of fluids and increasing the amount of fiber in your diet can also help prevent constipation. If you experience constipation, call the doctor.

- **Hair loss** (alopecia) will occur with CHOP. Temporary and total loss of body hair usually occurs two to three weeks after treatment begins. Loss of hair on the head usually occurs first, followed by loss of body hair (including eyebrows, eyelashes, and pubic hair) slowly throughout the course of chemotherapy. After treatment with CHOP has ended, hair growth should return, however hair color and texture may change. If you plan to purchase a wig, ask your nurse for a prescription. Wigs are often covered on health insurance policies. Additional information about hair loss, wigs and other head coverings can be found at the Patient Education Resource Center on Level B1 of the Cancer Center.

- **Steroid Side Effects:** Potential side effects of the steroid prednisone can include: trouble sleeping, increased appetite, fluid retention and swelling, indigestion, restlessness, nervousness, headache, blurred vision, muscle
cramps and weakness, increased blood sugar level, bone pain, and high blood pressure. Call the clinic if you develop any of these symptoms.

**Late Side Effects:**

- **Heart damage** can be a concern with Doxorubicin, but typically at higher doses than given with CHOP for lymphoma. Notify your doctor if you experience chest pain, palpitations or shortness of breath.

- **Fertility / Menopause:** The CHOP regimen may interfere with the normal menstrual cycle (period) in women and may stop sperm production in men. For some women, menstrual periods may become irregular, stop completely or in some cases, women may experience menopause. This may impact your ability to have children and may cause sterility. Discuss fertility options with your doctor before beginning treatment. Do not assume that you cannot get pregnant or cause a pregnancy; always use a contraceptive method throughout chemotherapy treatment.

**More Information:**
This document contains condensed information only. For individual drug sheets, or more comprehensive information, visit the Patient Education Resource Center on level B1 of the Cancer Center or online @ [http://medlineplus.gov](http://medlineplus.gov) (select “drug information”).